## Judge Burka's Remarks

Your front page story on Judge Burka highlights a critical factor in the breakdown of our criminal justice system. Judge Burka's ill-chosen and inflamatory remarks give credence to those who seek to invest common crimes with political meaning.

The dangerous increase in politicization within our penal institutions so forcibly demonstrated in the terrible Attica tragedy reflects a new and frightening turn in criminal response.

Rape and robbery are not political crimes. But Judge Burka may help to make them so. He reinforces those who make that claim by mounting a racist attack on a black defendant from the bench.

Telling James Robinson that "black is pretty ugly" and that "nothing makes me madder than . . . those bumper stickers that says Black is Beautiful" exacerbates fears of bigotry among the entire black community.

There is no excuse for linking criminal behavior with black pride.

When a member of the judiciary contributes in any fashion to this kind of irresponsible thinking, he threatens every responsible member of the community, black and white. And he vastly complicates the task of the community, black and white. And he vastly complicates the task of all of us who try to provide intelligent, responsible leadership within the black community.

A city with so large a percentage of hard-working, civic-minded black citizens as the District of Columbia deserves a more responsible judiciary.

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